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BLUE PANTHER DESTAPA A LOVE MACHINE

"You mean to tell me the piledriver is BANNED here?" screams an upset Art Barr!

In the main event of the CMLL card held Friday, April 3, 1992, at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City, The Blue Panther defeated The Love Machine two falls to zero via disqualification in the second fall to win a mascara contra mascara match. The Love Machine was unmasked as Arthur James Barr, age 25, of four years' experience, of Portland, Oregon. During the post-match, a frustrated Barr attacked Panther and "injured" Panther so badly that he was "forced to cancel" all of his bookings for at least the next week.

In this match, it should be immediately pointed out, three referees were assigned, one per fall. The referee for the first fall was the fair referee el Pompin. The referee for the second fall was CMLL head referee, the impartial Roberto "el Guero" Rangel. The referee for the third and deciding fall would have been heel referee "el Gato Montini" (Javier Medina). Montini has recently played a heel referee to the hilt, going far beyond the heel ref antics of the late "el Gran Davis" (q.e.p.d.), so much so in fact that Montini had been ejected from a match just two weeks earlier. During tonight's main event, seen in the USA on Galavision on 4/12, Montini's refereeing of the third fall meant that Machine needed a first fall win badly so that he would not be forced to wrestle a third fall under the supervision of a biased official.

During that first fall, Machine got off to a fast start, but gradually Panther assumed the advantage. Panther was working over the knee of Machine's that Panther had injured a few months back. Panther also worked over Machine's back, and Panther won the first fall at the 3:37 mark with a double-arm-suplex-into-an-over-the-knee backbreaker submission. So Machine was already in trouble. This despite the fact that Machine towered over Panther. It looked to me as if Machine, wearing a huge lift in his right shoe (for no apparent reason) and a sizable left shoe, was a full foot taller than Panther. And as if being a fall down was not bad enough, Panther was working tecnico style, and the 50/50 split in cheers that had greeted the wrestlers during opera star/ring announcer Vitorino's introductions had turned to nearly all Panther and "Mexico, Mexico" cheers.

Panther got off to a fast start in the second fall, but Machine made a comeback and, in a mirror to the first fall, gained more and more of an advantage as the fall went on. Machine posted Panther several times and had several near falls. Each time Panther kicked out, but each time it took him longer and longer to escape. Machine did a nice Gran-Hamada-style tope en reversa off the second rope outside the ring and Panther sold well for Machine, although it appeared at times that Panther was shying away from some of Machine's more intense offense (lariats and DDTs). Some of the crowd came back to cheer for Machine, but Panther still had the majority, which I guess shows that the level of crowd noise (which was high all night) was not faked or added. Finally, after the near falls, Machine got Panther up and, despite last second warnings in Spanish by referee Rangel, delivered a tombstone piledriver to Panther. In mock horror, Rangel pulled Machine off of Panther and raised Panther's hand, at the 4:38 mark of the fall and the 8:15 mark of the match, awarding the match to Panther, as yes, you guessed, the piledriver is banned in this territory. That's funny, they did a tombstone piledriver last week as the finish of the first fall when la Fiera pinned Konnan el Barbaro in full view of the referee--and guess who the referee was? Rangel and Montini were both looking right at Fiera's piledriver! So explain to me, please, how the move is legal one week and illegal the next. This has left a really bad taste in my mouth and caused me to lower the grade from the 3 stars I was going to give it to a negative two stars for a truly ridiculous finish. After the match, after unmasking, Barr tried to regain some of his babyface stature by announcing in broken Spanish that his "home is Mexico and I love you Mexico" but the fans were so surprised at what they had just seen that he got only a mild reaction from one section. Actually, looking at the replay, the crowd, which had made a lot of noise all night long, was almost totally silenced by the finish of this match. A newspaper account I had read of the match had seemed to indicate that there was a near-riot after the match, but if there was, I didn't see it, even when an upset Barr attacked Panther and knocked him off the stretcher (Panther was selling the piledriver to the hilt and is still selling it, missing a week's worth of shows because he is still "injured" from the blow.) This is the kind of finish that has almost killed the other promotion (UWA) and the CMLL would be

advised not to try such a screw-job finish in the big stipulation matches for a while. I know they did not really want to blow the feud off but this was ridiculous. By the way, the announcers, particularly Doctor Alfonso Morales, were quickly and often jumping all over Barr's case for using an illegal move and how he should have known better and how the fair referee made the right call. They were also quick to point out how many cheers Panther was getting and acknowledged every "grito de 'Mexico! Mexico!'" By the way, they said the tombstone is called "la martinete" in Spanish, for those of you keeping track (and you know who you are).

The rest of the card, however, was pretty good. The semifinal saw Atlantis retain his NWA World Middleweight Championship for the 32nd straight time by defeating la Fiera (Arturo Casco Poblano) two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 19:02. Atlantis won the first fall in 6:48 with a Lizmark-like spinning tope en reversa from off of the top rope and a cover. The second fall went to la Fiera in 3:13 via count out of the ring when Fiera hit Atlantis with a swan dive over the top rope (just barely grazing the top rope) and Atlantis "hurt his shoulder" as he hit the wooden floor and could not make it back in in time. The first two falls had been wrestled pretty clean (the referee was Rangel). They particularly did a lot of switch advantage spots on the mat, which was technically fine but not overly exciting as was the Blue Panther/Atlantis match in a similar vein. The third fall was more exciting, but not so good as they could have done. Atlantis got two near falls before putting Fiera (and they nearly botched this up) in Atlantis's normal finisher, the torture rack. Fiera struggled but gave up at the 9:11 mark of the third fall. Atlantis only had a couple of near falls and Fiera had none. It was technically sound but not very exciting. There was a lot of crowd heat—they particularly got into counting up to twenty when a wrestler was near being counted out of the ring. Fiera apparently was one of the very best luchadores in the world in the early- to mid-1980's and he's not bad now, but he's chubbier and out of shape a bit and gets by more on heel charisma than heel action. Atlantis, as always, wrestles at right about the level of his opponent, which means he can have a negative star match versus Kung Fu and a four-star match versus The Blue Panther. Here, I gave this ***.

The tercera of the evening was the card was the second match of the television show. The team of Konnan el Barbaro (Carlos Santiago Espada Moises), el Rayo de Jalisco junior (Maximino Linares junior) and "el Perro" Aguayo (Pedro Aguayo Damian) won a non-title match from the Mexican National Trios Champions, los Hermanos Dinamita {Cien Caras (Carmello Reyes Gonzales), Mascara Ano Dos Mil, and Universo Ano Dos Mil) in 13:36 in two straight falls. Really the tecnicos (Konnan et al.) had the advantage most of the match and looked real good in doing so. Mascara Ano Dos Mil and Rayo ripped at each other's mask to remind the fans that the feud between Rayo and los Dinamita, which has been going on for almost four years now, is not over yet. There was a ton of heat for this match, particularly when Konnan threatened to punch out referee Montini (he never did, though). This helped get Konnan more over as a face, but still nobody got more cheers or chants than Aguayo. The first fall went 6:12 before Konnan made Universo submit to a rocking reversed boston crab (sort of) submission hold. The finish of the second fall, which came after a big Rayo splash outside the ring, saw Aguayo struggle but get Caras over with a crucifix at the 7:24 mark for a clean pinfall victory. Nothing was said on television about Konnan's retirement or this being his last match, but I do believe he no-showed the WWF TV tapings that he was expected to be at on 4/6 and 4/7 and he has not been booked in Mexico since the show of 4/3. This match was short, sweet, had good heat, and good action. *** 1/4.

The segunda of the card was our television opener. Here, the CMLL World Trios Champions los Intocables del Ring {Pierroth junior, Jaque Mate, and Masakre (Aristoteles Radames Cocco Flores)} defeated the team of Octagon, la Mascara Sagrada, and Apolo Dantes (Jose Luis Amezcua Curiel) two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 14:12 in a non-title match. The focus of this match was the two-year-old feud between Pierroth junior (who is both CMLL World Light Heavyweight Champion and CMLL World Trios Champion) and la Mascara Sagrada (who is both Mexican National Light Heavyweight Champion and Mexican National Parejas [tag-team] champion). Sagrada, in fact, beat Pierroth for his National Light Heavyweight title that he now holds. The focus of the match on the feud between the two was continued in the announcer's booth, where the commentators spent the whole match building it up. And the finish of the third fall did too, as Pierroth won via a clean-as-a-sheet submission over Sagrada (at the 4:34 mark of the fall) with the old Bat Hanging Hold, now called "la Pierrothtina." This set up a Pierroth title defense this past Saturday night, April 11, 1992, in San Luis Potosi, San Luis Potosi, Mexico. It wouldn't surprise me if Sagrada won, based on the finish of this TV match, but I would think if Sagrada were winning, since he is the babyface, the CMLL would hold the match in Mexico City, if not also on television. The first two falls were fine here, too; Dantes pinned Masakre at 4:18 of the first with the northern lights suplex hold and all three rudos made Sagrada submit at the 5:20 mark of the second fall while kicking him in the stomach and applying a simultaneous surfboard arm stretcher submission hold. Everyone looked good here. ***.

The only other note from the card is the weekly popularity poll, "el Cartometro del Ring." Octagon and Atlantis were 1-2 among tecnicos, which is hardly a surprise since their movie "La Revancha" is doing booming business in its fourth week of release. The Blue Panther and Sangre Chicana were 1-2 for rudos. Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos and Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales were 1-2 for las luchadoras. 1-2 among los Super-Minis were, as usual, la Mascarita

Sagrada and Octagoncito. Trios 1-2 were los Intocables del Ring and los Mosqueteros del Diablo, los Brazos. The "relevante" of the week was la Bestia Salvaje's pinning Atlantis in two straight falls last week. I would have really loved to have seen the Salvaje/Atlantis match, but Salvaje was injured earlier in the week and is still not back. The dive of the week was Asai's moonsault (la quebrada) onto el Brazo de Plata from the 3/27/92 show. All in all a good television show until the finish of the main event.

CMLL NEWS

Here are some of the latest results I have from the CMLL:

* Tuesday, March 24, 1992, at la Arena Coliseo, saw a card headlined by the team of Octagon, Atlantis, and Konnan. el Barbaro defeated ex-CMLL Trios Champions los Nuevos Infernales (M. S. 1, el Pirata Morgan, and el Satanico) two falls to one when captain Atlantis made captain el Satanico submit to the torture rack in the third and deciding fall. This got a measure of revenge for the tecnicos, as they had lost to these same Infernales in the semifinals of the CMLL World Trios Tournament back on October 15, 1992, at la Arena Mexico. This was said to have been a really good match. The semifinal saw los Guerreros Mayas (who are getting a huge push) {Damian, el Guerrero, el Guerrero Maya, and el Guerrero del Futuro} defeat the trio team of el Gran Apache I, Furor, and Juan "el Huracan" Sevilla two falls to one. Those are the only results I have for that card.

* The card held at la Arena Isabel in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico, on Thursday, March 26, 1992, was highlighted by Octagon defending his Mexican National Midleweight Championship versus la Bestia Salvaje. As reported last week, Octagon won two falls to one. The finish of the third fall was clean, with Octagon using his usual finisher, the Russian-leg-sweep-into-the-leg-behind-the-neck/arm-stretcher submission hold. This was said to have been an outstanding match in the analysis printed by Super Luchas magazine, and I don't doubt it for a moment. There was no traditional semifinal or tercera to the card but rather a cuadrangular trios one-night tournament. In the semifinals of this mini-tournament, los Mosqueteros del Diablo, los Brazos (el Brazo, el Brazo de Oro, and el Brazo de Plata) defeated los Nuevos Infernales in three falls and los Intocables defeated los Guerreros Mayas in three falls (I told you los Mayas were getting a big push). In the finals, los Intocables defeated los Brazos (this may mean los Brazos are next up to be CMLL World Trios Champions) in three falls. The segunda of the card found, in a rare mano a mano match so low on the card, Ponzona (Americo Rocca) defeated Cielon Ramirez. This sets up Ponzona for a title shot at Ramirez's National Welterweight Championship very soon (not the next Thursday night, though, as neither was booked on that show). Finally, in the opener, Atomo defeated Marabunta in three falls. Sometimes, Atomo is billed as "Atomo" and sometimes as "Super Atomo" and when he goes to Tokyo for the 4/19 Universal card, he will be billed (this time without the mask) as "Robin Hood, el Arquero I." Any way you bill him, he is still Aaron Alvarado Nieves, youngest of the seven wrestling "Brazos" brothers.

* On March 27, at la Arena Mexico, in the match that did not air on TV last Sunday, April 5, 1992, the brothers Casas teamed up for the first time since elder brother put on a mask as Felino. The result saw el Felino ("Baby" Casas) and Canelo Casas (Erick Casas Ruiz) defeat el Nuevo Audaz and el Guerrero Samurai II in three falls. By the way, the match that did not air on television this weekend had los Nuevos Destructores del Ring (Tony Arce, el Vulcano, and Vandal Drummond—oops, no it's just his favorite team, the third partner was Rocco Valente) versus el Cachorro Mendoza, el Volador, and el Misterioso.

* And, on April 4, 1992, at la Pista Arena Revolucion in Mexico City, All Japan Women wrestlers Akira Hokuto and Etsuko Mita debuted for the CMLL. They are billed as Akira and Mita, respectively. They are the first Japanese women (or any Japanese that I can remember) to begin their tour of Mexico as heels (or rudas, if you prefer). Akira and Mita teamed with Maria del Angel, a young luchadora with a world of potential, and they won two out of three falls versus Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales, la Olimpica, and la Super Estrella. I have no other results from the card but I do know that the main event was Atlantis, Lizmark, and el Faraon (who is back full-time, though why I don't know) versus el Satanico, The Blue Panther, and el Espectro de Ultratumba (a really odd pair of teams).

* Here is the card for NEXT WEEK's television, to air Sunday, April 19, 1992, in the USA. It was taped Friday, April 10, 1992, at la Arena Coliseo in Mexico City and I can't wait already as you shall see. The main event was scheduled to be The Love Machine (Arthur Barr, without a mask), Black Magic (Norman Smiley), and captain Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai) versus The Blue Panther, la Fiera (Arturo Casco Poblano), and captain el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez). However, two papers reported the day of the card that Panther was still injured from his match April 3, and that his place on the rudo team would likely be taken by either Ponzona, el Espectro junior, or el Espectro de Ultratumba. The point of the main event, though, is likely to give el Satanico a win in Mexico and establish him as Dragon's nemesis for the feud to occur after Dragon wins Satanico's NWA World Light Heavyweight Belt in Tokyo. The semifinal for next week's TV will have Atlantis, la Mano Negra, and la Mascara Sagrada versus a rudo "dream team:" Fuerza Guerrera, Jerry "el Puma" Estrada, and Emilio Charles junior "el Rey del Beautiful." Japanese wrestlers highlight the next two matches. In the tercera, Iga (Masao Orihara), Koga (Takayuki Nakahara), and el Filoso will face los Nuevos Destructores del Ring (Tony Arce, el Vulcano, and Rocco Valente). Watch for Iga

and el Filoso to do simultaneous or consecutive moonsaults out of the ring. The segunda has Akira (Akira Hokuto), Mita (Etsuko Mita) versus Xochitl Hamada and Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales. And the opener has los Guerreros Mayas (Damian, el Guerrero, el Guerrero Maya, and el Guerrero del Futuro) versus los Metalicos (Oro, Plata, and Bronce [ex-la Mascara]). Now either the first or second match will be cut from the TV show and I am torn between wanting to get my first look at los Guerreros Mayas in action and between getting my first look at Akira, Mita, and Hamada in CMLL rings. Either way, I'll be happy.

* One other note, two wrestlers have cancelled bookings for this week. El Hijo del Solitario is out for two weeks with a broken bone in his left arm and el Brazo de Plata has stopped working temporarily after a commission-mandated physical indicated fairly severe heart problems, attributed in *Ovaciones* newspaper as being weight-related. El Brazo de Plata is one of my favorite luchadores but as anyone can see he is way way overweight and I am sure that that can not be any good for his health. Just 3-4 years ago, he was no bigger than his brothers, too, so he's put on a lot of weight consistently in the recent past.

* Also, Three Count Professional Wrestling Newsletter reports that Jack Victory and Rip Morgan will be starting up with the EMLL (for Paco Alonso) and also for Monterrey promoter Carlos Elizondo starting April 12, 1992 (I may even have a result from their 4/12 match at la Arena Coliseo in the late news section below).

UWA NEWS and LATE NEWS

Very few results from this circuit this week. On a card held April 7 at the "el Palenque de la Feria" Gym in Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico, los Tinieblas (Tinieblas I, el Hijo de Tinieblas, and their valet Alushe) defeated los Guerreros del Acero (The Steel Warriors I and II and their valet el Maledito Sacerdote) two falls to one. The finish of the third fall saw Steel Warriors disqualified for the outside interference of their valet. On April 8, at the "el Deportivo Penoles" gym in Mexico City, younger stars el Macho II and Carlos (Don't call me Gory) Chavez emerged victorious in three falls over Stelaris and el Hijo de Super Zan.

The UWA Television taping for this week, held Friday, April 10, 1992, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl in Netzahualcoyotl, Mexico, Mexico, and to be broadcast on Imevision on Saturday, April 18, 1992, featured these bouts: In the main event, The Pegasus Kid, Dos Caras, and el Villano III met Fishman, Rambo, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow). Pegasus and Fishman are in a feud, as you shall see in the late results below. The TV semifinal had Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, Tinieblas I, and el Hijo de Tinieblas (with Alushe) versus Doctor Wagner junior, Kahos I, and Shu, el Guerrero, in one of Shu's last UWA matches before he jumps to the CMLL on 4/19. The TV opener will have los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) who are UWA and WWA World Parejas Champions, facing los Cazadores del Cabeza (The Head Hunters A and B) in a non-title match. At the arena, the two opening bouts will have Stelaris versus Cheyene and Ricky Boy and Resplendor teaming up versus los Dragones Chinos I and II. Here are the results from the UWA card at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos in Naucalpan, Mexico, Mexico, held Sunday, April 12, 1992. In the main event, for the WWF World Light Heavyweight Championship, Champion The Pegasus Kid defeated challenger Fishman in three falls. The finish of the third fall saw Fishman go up to the top rope for a big dive, but Pegasus wasn't as "woozy" as Fishman had suspected; Pegasus punched Fishman in the stomach, climbed to the top rope, and delivered a superplex from off of the top rope, then rolled over for the cover and three count. Poor Fishman; he may be the only wrestler ever to have had losing matches for both the WWF World Light Heavyweight belt and the NWA World Light Heavyweight belt (1983 versus Tiger Mask) at el Toreo. By the way, on April 3 at Netzahualcoyotl, el Villano V won the UWA World Light Heavyweight title by defeating el Signo. In the semifinal of the el Toreo card, Canek, el Villano V, and el Villano III defeated Bam Bam Bigelow and The Head Hunters A and B when el Villano III pinned A AND B after one Head Hunter did a diving head butt from off of the top rope, aiming for III, but hit the other Head Hunter by accident, and both Hunters were "knocked out." El Villano V was replacing Dos Caras in this match; Caras no-showed due to an injury, which makes two out of the last three el Toreo matches he's been booked in that he's no-showed. The tercera of the evening, and said to be the best match, saw el Texano, Silver King, and el Sicodelico draw in the third fall with Jose "el Negro" Casas, Rambo, and Doctor Wagner junior in the third fall. The segunda saw el Villano IV, el Coloso, and el Fantasma defeat el Tigre Canadiense, el Espanto junior, and el Scorpio I two falls to one, and el Tigre Canadiense turned face at the end of this match. The opener saw Kendo Star and los Dragones Chinos I and II defeat Shu, el Guerrero, Momotaro (Masa Michinoku), and el Lobo Rubio two falls to one. At the CMLL card held Sunday, April 12, 1992, at la Arena Mexico, los Mosqueteros del Diablo, los Brazos (el Brazo, el Brazo de oro, and el Brazo de Plata) defeated Lizmark, el Hijo de Lizmark, and el Faraon two falls to one when el Brazo de Plata pinned el Hijo de Lizmark in the third fall with a diving body press from off of the top rope. This was said to be a good match. The semifinal saw the "Team From Beyond The Grave" (el Espectro junior, el Espectro de Ultratumba, and el Cadaver de Ultratumba) defeat Mogur, the Blue Demon junior, and el Comando Ruso 2-1. Also, Iga, Koga, and Rokambole (the MD of lucha libre) defeated Erick "el Canelo" Casas and los Supremos I and II 2-1 (Casas legit "punished" both Koga and Iga, according to *La Prensa*, for not having caught onto the lucha libre style fully or well enough yet). The segunda had Neftali, Venus, and la Diabolica defeated Josseline, Selene, and Mitsuki Wong in three falls. No result was given for the inicial (opener).

CALIFORNIA CARD REVIEW

Something different this week. This is a review of an independent lucha libre card, held Sunday, March 28, 1982, at the All Nations Center gymnasium outside Los Angeles, California. Thanks to Kurt Brown, who sent me a video tape, I was able to view (most of) the action and can pass along the news.

The first match was a singles match between Ponky Boy (managed by Black Bull, who was wearing a blonde wig so that people would not know it was Black Bull) versus el Delfin. This bout ended in a draw at a little over nine minutes. Rudo Ponky Boy got a submission victory at 1:57 with la de a caballo (the camel clutch) and el Delfin came back in the second with a sunset flip out of nowhere at around 3:23. Both of the first two falls featured Ponky Boy on offense virtually the whole fall. The only time el Delfin had any offense was after a missed splash dive by Ponky Boy. Finally, in the third fall, el Delfin made his face comeback and got some nice cheers from the crowd in doing so. The referee, as per usual, tried to stop the tecnico Delfin from throwing punches (and thus leaving his style) and the result was a little help for Ponky Boy. But el Delfin came back and won some switch advantage spots before putting el Delfin in la tapatia (the upside down surfboard). But Ponky shifted his weight and toppled backwards, and both men's shoulders were down for the count of three. Well, actually, el Delfin got his left shoulder up, but the referee did not see it. To save face as a tecnico, el Delfin then cleared the ring of Ponky Boy and manager. Both these guys are fairly inexperienced and the timing wasn't the best in the world, but the match was kept short and enjoyable.

In the second match, Vandal Drummond teamed with the Black Bull (same one from the first match) to go up against the team of Greg Regalado and The Gemini Kid. These teams also split the first two falls. Regalado pinned Drummond with the northern lights suplex hold (done very well I might add) at the 9:15 mark but Drummond and Bull got a submission on a double arm stretcher submission hold on The Gemini Kid at 2:50 of the second fall. The third fall heated up considerably as, led by Drummond, the wrestlers did a number of nice high spots. Bull even did a "charging bull" spot that the crowd took as a Three-Stooges-Curly spot. Regalado then did a tope suicida between the second and third ropes but dove over, not onto, Drummond (no height jokes, please). The Gemini Kid, back in the ring, got the quick advantage on The Black Bull and scored at pin fall at the 9:24 mark with a diving head butt from off of the top rope. After the match, Drummond pounded away at Bull for losing the fall and the match and Drummond left to go back to the locker room without Bull. This was better than you might think and pretty fluid, especially with Drummond in. Regalado has both improved in the ring and put on a lot of weight (and shoes) since the last time I saw him but would be well advised to play his reactions to the crowd more slowly and dramatically. Gemini Kid is fine, too, and did a nice suplex on Black Bull. All in all, pretty good.

In the tercera of our five-card evening, Pistol Pete and el Huchicero Negro defeated Tlaloc and The Predator two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 11:35. The rudos (Negro and Pete) attacked the tecnicos before the opening bell and had a momentary advantage, but the tecnicos were too strong and won the first fall easily in 3:40, culminating when Tlaloc pinned Pistol Pete with a regular sunset flip. The rudos came back in the second fall, emerging victorious when Pete pinned Negro at the 3:19 mark with a jumping elbow after los crotchs (body slam). This match, at this point, was not so good as the previous one; especially weak were the clotheslines, which throughout lucha libre are never as strong as in Japan and America. Happily, the match picked up a lot in the third fall. Predator went after Negro's mask and Pete, in retaliation, brought a huge garbage can into the ring, which he bopped Tlaloc on the head with. The momentum went back and forth before finally the heels, managing to catch the referee out of position, fouled the tecnicos and scored pinfall covers one right after the other. The time of the third fall was 34:36 and Negro pinned Predator at that mark to close things out. The third fall was really good, here, as they did moves, brawled in and outside the ring, Predator had his mask ripped, and they created a nice scenario to bring the "revancha" back next week. In fact, the challenges were issued for revenge right after the match was over.

The semifinal had the legendary Al Murrieta teaming with el Talisman Negro (ex el-Fonseca junior) versus Arandu and el Principe Azul. I do know that the face team, Arandu, and Azul, won, but the TV camera recording this match went out at the 10:49 mark of the first fall and did not come back on until the end of the victory celebration by the tecnicos in the ring. Azul looked a little weak with his punches but the rest looked fine. Many of the younger luchadores here could learn a lot by watching Murrieta; while they have the moves and holds down a bit better than Al, none has his flair and sense of the theatrics and dramatics for the spectacle. Arandu looked the best move for move, particularly in his moves with Negro.

The main event had real mismatched parejas, at least talent-wise. The tecnicos team of Apache and el Piloto Suicida faced the rudo team of Gory CHavez and Crazy Boy. Crazy Boy has worked two tours of Mexico City for the EMLL, the second and more successful one under the ring name Super Star. CHavez is enormous, in the same sense as el Brazo de Plata. Apache is similar to CHavez, but not so corpulent. Anyway, the first fall went 6:49 before Piloto pinned Crazy Boy with a Liger-flip "mortal al frente" plancha off the top rope. Right before this Apache had pinned CHavez after CHavez had nailed Apache with a dropkick. You read that right. A wrestler was actually

pinned AFTER HE DID A SUCCESSFUL DROPKICK. You'd have to see it to believe it. The second fall went 4:25 before CHavez pinned Apache with a diving body press from off of the top rope (very impressive move from CHavez who otherwise wasn't much). The third fall saw Crazy Boy and Piloto Suicida, the two best talents on the card (by a good margin) perform a ton of high spots, mostly with each other. Crazy went after Piloto's mask, a spot they repeated in a follow-up singles match held Saturday, April 11, 1992, in Santa Ana, California, in the main event of a card held at a public gym. In that match, both men ripped at each other's mask; in fact, Suicida was disqualified for the match in the third fall for completely removing Crazy Boy's mask, and they have a mascara contra mascara match set up for April 25 at the same facility. Back to the match of the 29th, though, the finish of the third fall and the match came at the 7:57 mark (and 19:11 overall) when Crazy Boy pinned Piloto clean with a diving body press halfway across the ring from off of the top rope. They did nice topes and the third fall made the match really. They brawled into the ringside chairs and WITH the ringside chairs. A real good match. Crazy Boy is said to be heading back to Mexico City for his third CMLL tour soon, so you can probably guess the result of the 25th. Crazy Boy is very good but he is in a tough spot trying to get a CMLL push as a masked lighter weight Hispanic wrestler, because that's exactly what the CMLL has in spades and those types of wrestlers trying to get a try out with the promotion are already plentiful enough.

LETTERS

Could you please explain upon your comment in an earlier issue about how you said "Don't go into Mexico City bars at all costs?" My friends and I were thinking of going but what fun would it be just to come back and go to sleep right after the card?

David Krause

Eastlake, Ohio

Dave, the admonition I received when I went to Mexico City (about staying out of the local cantinas at all costs) was given to me by a whole host of people—travel agents, consular officers, friends who had been there, hotel desk clerks, luchadores, etc. What they meant, though, was to stay out of the LOCAL BARS, those corner bars where the clientele is rough, not kindly disposed towards "Yanquis," and not very familiar with the English language. Nobody said anything bad about HOTEL BARS and their upper-class ilk in the Zona Rosa, the pink zone where most of the upscale tourists generally stay. I have been by (not in, as I don't drink) those bars, discotheques, hotel lounges, and fine-food/with-liquor places fairly late at night (around 2:00 am) and never felt unsafe or that going in would be any sort of a problem. Many late-night restaurants serve alcohol; these restaurants serve American food (like Shirley's and VIPs), Mexican food, Japanese food, Chinese food, Italian food, etc. There will be a number of places to go after a card to quench a thirst; generally, though, it will be at hotel lounges and/or at restaurants. There are a few bars in the Zona Rosa but most are combination bars/discos which are, believe it or not, usually louder than their American counterparts. Mexico City has very much a late-night mentality, and after the cards end (between 11:00 and midnight) there are still many places to go for several hours. I particularly hope this helps assuage the fears of a certain lucha libre aficionado in Hialeah, who writes a great weekly column in "3 Count," too.

Does Mil Mascaras ever do a job?

Robert Trobich

Charlotte, North Carolina

and others, paraphrased from several letters

Many letter writers have asked me this question and a corollary, where can I get Mil Mascaras masks? The answer to the first question is that I have no record of Mil Mascaras losing a SINGLES match in Mexico ever. It must have happened sometimes because I know he has won and lost and won back the ALL World Heavyweight Championship from Guatemala. I do know he lost a singles match via count out of the ring to Jumbo Tsuruta in 1977. He has lost FALLS in both parejas (tag-teams) and trios (six-man tags) both in Mexico and Japan, though it is very rare. He has even lost the third fall of a trio tag to set up a title defense for the IWA World Heavyweight Championship he has held for 17 years. I do know that in 1990 he lost the third fall of a cuadrangular tag versus los Brazos and Canek—on December 30, 1990, he was pinned by el Brazo de Plata with an off-of-the-top-rope-diving body press clean in the third fall, to set up a title defense that Mascaras won the next week. Both matches were held at el Toreo. That's about the only clean clear-cut deciding-fall pinfall loss I have any record on for Mascaras. If any one else knows, either Dave or anyone, let me know. Masks are available only in Mexico and/or in Japan.

Yesterday as I was tuned to M1 waiting for "Los Idolos de Hoy en La Lucha Libre" to start, I found for some reason it was pre-empted for Davis Cup action. I montitored Imevision for the rest of the day...I then watched on and off all day Sunday and the UWA show never aired...Last night, at 7:15, I turned to channel 14, which is XHTV (Televisa) or Satellite M1, and saw Orihara doing his moonwalk on the floor, which BTW missed! I waited for the main event, which

was Konnan/Octagon/Atlantis versus los Infernales. It had to be the Friday show...Do you have a listing for all the time that all of the wrestling shows air on the various Mexico stations? I just think it would be interesting to know what air when. I know that in addition to the showing of the EMLL show last (Saturday) night, it airs on Sundays at 1:00 pm EST. Also, do you know if the show airs on XHGC (Televisa)? Since the Mexican satellites are in a lower orbit than are the US satellites, the picture I get is only OK, and pretty staticky, on XEW, XHTV, and even Imevisión. If you could tell me if and when the show airs on XHGC, I would appreciate it. BTW, I also noticed that GLOW aired on XHTV today at noon.

David Scherer

Mamora, New Jersey

Dave, I hope this helps. Here is what wrestling airs when on Mexican network television. My source is the *Ovaciones* newspaper of Friday, April 10, 1992, so this information is very current. On Saturdays, the UWA television show entitled "Los Idolos de Hoy en la Lucha Libre" airs from 2:30 pm Mexico City time to 4:00 pm Mexico City time on channel 13, Imevisión. On the Morelos 1 (M1) satellite, this should be the Imevisión feed. 2:30 pm Mexico City time translates to 4:30 Eastern DAYLIGHT time. On Saturday nights, at 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Mexico City time (therefore 9:00 pm-11:00 pm EST), the CMLL has a show called simply "Lucha Libre." It is a call-in show, with an in-studio guest, but they also show 3-4 matches on this show, including the opener from the night before that won't air on the main Sunday show, and the main events from the Sunday night and Tuesday night CMLL cards. This is what you saw on M1, Channel 14, Televisa/XH-TV. Then, on Sunday afternoons, at noon to 2:00 pm Mexico City time, or 2:00 pm-4:00 pm EST, the "Estrellas de Lucha Libre" show airs. This show is the one taped 36 hours or so earlier on Friday night at either la Arena Mexico or la Arena Coliseo. This is the same show we see seven days later on Galavisión (and on channel 22 in Los Angeles) at 7:30 pm-9:30 pm EST. It is on the M1, channel 14, Televisa/XEW satellite feed. In addition, on cable in Mexico City, WGN and USA network broadcast WCW and WWF shows respectively, and the Cablevisión network broadcasts 3 hours of lucha libre from 6:00 to 9:00 pm on Sunday nights on its channel 24, and Multivisión cable broadcasts 1 hour of lucha libre (which I believe is WWF SuperStars) on Friday afternoons from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm on channel MD. I do not know what promotion the Cablevisión show is from, nor do I know if these go up on satellite. A number of people have mentioned the lower orbit/poor quality relationship to me. For those of you who were interested in responding to my UWA tape-trade offer, my source tapes them off the satellite from his dish in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, which is about as far south as you can get in the continental United States, and the quality on the tapes has been excellent.

Note: For those still interested, I am still selling my 1991 annual for \$10.00. ALL the annuals have been mailed out by now. Some were delayed due to pure and simple screw-ups on my part but all the annuals have gone out now. If any one is interested in the annual, or the tapes, or just chatting, please feel free to call me any time or write me, and if you miss me, I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

LUCHADORES EN JAPON

The big news about Mexican wrestlers in Japan is all about to happen. In New Japan, luchadores Jose "el Negro" Casas and Eddy Guerrero will be a part of the nine-man annual junior heavyweight league. Other wrestlers in the tournament who have toured Mexico recently are el Samurai (Osamu Matsuda), Lyger (Keiichi Yamada), and The Pegasus Kid (Christopher Michael Benoit). The league's opening night is April 16, 1992.

In SWS, you might remember that Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai) had been scheduled to challenge Lizmark (Juan Banos) for the latter's NWA World Light Heavyweight Championship in a match to be held Saturday, April 18, 1992, at The Tokyo Coliseum in Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan. Well, on April 5 at la Arena Mexico, Lizmark lost that belt to el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez). That threw the Dragon title challenge into doubt. Well, this week, SWS announced that el Satanico would take Lizmark's place and defend the NWA belt versus (and likely drop it to) Dragon on that same card of the 18th. This will be el Satanico's first ever tour of Japan, and I wonder if he is not the biggest local star (of the post 1950s-era) never to have toured Japan even once.

Finally, FMW has invited The Starman and The Centurion for its next tour of Japan rings in late April/early May. These two wrestle for the WWA as two of the three los Mercenarios Americanos, ex-trios world champions. Both Starman and Centurion have many big matches booked, but when one thinks of FMW, the main thought that comes to mind are the big bloody street fights and barbed-wire matches. Based on the schedule announced, Starman has street fights booked for April 25 in Hamamatsu, April 30 in Takefu, and May 6 in Nikei. The Centurion has street fights booked April 26 in Matsuzaka, April 27 in Yokasichi, April 30 in Takefu, May 4 in Akashi, a barbed wire street fight for May 3 in Osaka, and a World Martial-Arts-Tag-Team title match May 7 in Toyota, teaming with The Big Tyton versus Atsushi Onita and Tarzan Goto. I do not believe that this title match is a barbed-wire or a street-fight or a fall-count-anywhere-on-the-Sea-of-Inchon match, but it will no doubt be a wild, woolly, and bloody affair as are all of Onita's main events these days, it seems. Good luck to Starman and Centurion and take care not to get hurt badly.

H Scott- hope you're enjoying the sheet! *Stm*

FUERZA GUERRERA MINI-BIOGRAPHY

Often considered one of the best workers in Mexico, and one of the very best small workers in the world, Fuerza Guerrera has been a central focus of the lighter weight divisions of the EMLL (now CMLL) in the last few years. Guerrera was born on December 14, 1954, and debuted at the fairly late age for a Mexican luchador of 26 when he debuted in August 1981, in a parejas match; his tag team partner in that match was none other than Jose "el Negro" Casas. Trained in Mexico City by famous ex-luchador Dick Angelo, Guerrera quickly rose to the top ranks in the EMLL, but even early on his feisty nature was causing him problems. In early 1982, he was suspended for an out-of-the-ring fight he got into. Returning to the mat wars in 1983, Guerrera continued his quick rise and on November 6, 1983, won a tournament final to crown a new Mexican National Lightweight Champion at la Pista Arena Revolucion in Mexico City. In the finals, Guerrera defeated la Aguila Venesolana, and became the 34th National Lightweight Champion. Guerrera would turn out to be the nemesis of Aguila everywhere throughout the 1980's. Guerrera lost the Lightweight Championship in 1985, but did not have to suffer for long. On December 3, 1985, he defeated Javier "el Monarca" Cruz at la Arena Coliseo in Mexico City to become the new National Welterweight Champion. Guerrera defended that title successfully four times before losing it back to Cruz in July of 1986. Guerrera then went to work the Tijuana WWA circuits for a while, and in March of 1988 in Tijuana won his first World Title, the WWA World Welterweight Title, a title he held until losing it to el Hijo del Santo on June 7, 1990, in the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan. Guerrera was not content to rest on his laurels for long in the smaller Tijuana circuit. He returned to Mexico City in 1989 and twice in 1989 won the NWA World Welterweight Championship from la Aguila Solitaria, first in early 1989 (becoming the 31st champion) and then a second time on September 21, 1989, at the 57th anniversary of lucha libre card at la Arena Mexico to become the 33rd NWA Champion. Guerrera held this belt until December 8, 1991, losing it to the current champion, el Misterioso. Guerrera, while still very hot-tempered (he has been disciplined for several fights with wrestlers and fans during his career), has become one of the, if not the leading rude wrestler in the modern-day CMLL, always able to make his opponent shine and providing variety and individuality in each and every singles match he has. A fitness nut, Guerrera now runs the gym in Mexico City that he was trained in, and trains several of the EMLL wrestlers there, including Octagon, el Misterioso, Casanova el Vampiro, Canadiense, and others.

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